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Dragoons Discover Excalibur

Story by Sgt. Jerry Wilson

Zabul, Afghanistan – Troopers of Alpha Battery, 3rd Squadron of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment (Archers) had the opportunity Thursday, June 22, 2010 to live out their motto of “First to Fire!” The Archers became the first battery within the Regiment to fire the newest round in the field artillery inventory, the 155mm Excalibur.

The Excalibur round is the first precision-guided, autonomous artillery round with a built in Global positioning system. With its GPS technology, the Excalibur has an improved trajectory glide that has significantly improved it’s accuracy at ranges greater than 30 kilometers. This increased accuracy allows for a higher probability of first round effectiveness.

Thanks to their recent transition from the older M198 towed Howitzer to the newer M777A2 towed Howitzer; Archer Battery was able to field the new round for the first time. The M777A2 is a fully digitized weapon which allows it to function with the Excalibur guidance system.

Archer waited to fire the round until they were able to receive the proper training on the equipment. The battery was able to receive that training from the unit they replaced in Afghanistan. The training included classes in the overall capabilities, functionality of the Excalibur, and how to configure it for firing.

The Troopers of Archer considered it an honor to field the new round.

“It was like firing a regular HE round,” said Sgt. Jordan West, the Archer Battery Gunner. “The excitement came from being the first to fire it in the Regiment, the newest artillery round in the Army’s inventory.”

“Our Battery motto here for Alpha Battery, 3rd Squadron 2nd Infantry is ‘First to Fire!’ West continued, “So it was natural for us.”



BOOM!

The ground trembles as Archer Battery fires of the first Excalibur round to ever be fired by the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment at Forward Operating Base Ramrod in Afghanistan.